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# Letter dated 11 May 2011 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and to Security Council resolution 1968 (2011) extending up to three months the Council's authorization to temporarily deploy from the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to UNOCI, three infantry companies, one aviation unit comprised of two military utility helicopters and three armed helicopters with crews, pursuant to the inter-mission cooperation arrangements provided for in paragraphs 4 to 6 of Security Council resolution 1609 (2005) and paragraph 6 of resolution 1938 (2010).

As you know, the security situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains very unstable as a result of the post-election crisis. There is always a risk that the conflict will flare up again, particularly in the western part of the country where the situation is extremely tenuous. The national security and rule of law institutions have disintegrated. Efforts to reconstitute the police and the gendarmerie will take time. The Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire, which assumed responsibility for restoring security, remain a motley bunch. The number of armed groups has multiplied further to the distribution of weapons to the Young Patriots and student groups loyal to the former President Gbagbo. Large numbers of weapons are still circulating in the communities, including some in the hands of civilians. The 2,500 members of the Republican Guard mixed in with the civilian population also constitute a major threat. Some are armed, including with heavy weapons that could easily be installed on vehicles.

The Government has identified the stabilization of the security situation, particularly in Abidjan and in the western part of the country, as an immediate priority and has requested assistance from UNOCI to that end. While the pro-Gbagbo militias and mercenaries have been dislodged from their main base in Abidjan, some of them are still in the area. The rest have fled to the west, where the security risks were already high owing to tensions over ethnic identity and land ownership, which have been aggravated by the post-election fighting.

In view of the foregoing, an extension of the cooperation arrangements between UNMIL and UNOCI will give UNOCI the mobility and deterrent capability it needs in order to provide assistance to the national authorities in responding to the immediate security challenges on the ground and further consolidating security in the country, including in Abidjan and in the west. To that end, I wish to propose that the Security Council authorize another extension, until 31 July 2011, of the aforementioned inter-mission cooperation arrangements, subject to the extension of

the mandate of UNOCI and the ongoing assessment of the security situation in both Côte d'Ivoire and in Liberia during this period.

The Secretariat will make every effort to ensure that the proposed extension of the inter-mission cooperation arrangements does not compromise the ability of UNMIL to carry out its mandate, particularly in view of the support it is providing to the electoral process in Liberia. The Secretariat will keep the Security Council informed of developments in this connection.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **BAN Ki-moon**